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BY JOHN MADISON MORTON.

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Season of 1882-83.

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A COMIC INTERLUDE,

IN ONE ACT.

WRITTEN BY

JOHN MADDISON MORTON,

AUTHOR OF

"Who Stole the Pocket-Book," "John Dobbs," "Your Life's in danger," "Done on Both Sides," "The King and I," "Brother Ben," "Milliners' Holiday," "Betsy Baker," "Two Buzzards," "Poor Pillicoddy," "My Husband's Ghost," "Our Wife," "Right's and Wrongs of Woman," "Sent to the Tower," Etc., Etc.

WITH ORIGINAL CASTS, COSTUMES, AND THE WHOLE OF THE STAGE BUSINESS, CORRECTLY MARKED AND ARRANGED, BY MR. J. B. WRIGHT, ASSISTANT MANAGER OF THE BOSTON THEATRE.

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CAST OF CHARACTERS.

	Adelphi Theatre, London, 1849.	*Howard Athenæum, Boston*, 1857.	*Burton's Theatre, New York*, 1857.	
Mr. Nathaniel Snoozle, . . .	Mr. Paul Bedford.	Mr. E. L. Davenport	Mr. W. E. Burton.	
Intruder, ...	" Wright.	" J. Brougham.	" J Brougham.	
Mr. Nathaniel Snoozle. . .				
Intruder, ...				

Time in representation, — 45 minutes.

COSTUMES.

Mr Snoozle.—White trowsers; white and pink striped waistcoat, large crimson tie; leopard skin cotton jacket; light brown wig.

Intruder.—Light brown striped trowsers; buff waistcoat; blue handkerchief; old black coat, to take off at the back when coming on.

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A MOST

UNWARRANTABLE INTRUSION.

SCENE.—*An elegantly furnished Apartment—Large French window at* C. *opening on to a flower garden—Doors at* R. H. *and* 3 E. L. H.—*At* 2 E. R. H. *a fireplace—A flower-stand, with four flower-pots and flowers,* 2 E. L. H.—*At* 3 E. L. H. *a pianoforte—At* R. C. *an easel, with a portrait of a man—A female portrait on the pianoforte—Work-table, chiffonier, table, chairs &c., &c.*

MR. SNOOZLE, *in a handsome dressing gown and velvet cap, extended in an easy chair,* R. H. *near table, on which are breakfast things, urn and fish and fish bowl—White and gold service—The fish bowl under the urn—Bread and butter, tea caddy, toasting fork, muffins, sugar basin, &c., &c. —Large bookcase,* L. H., *with books, and three plaster busts on the top—Table,* R. H., *with writing desk, and palette and brushes.*

Sno. Now, this is what I call comfortable! How delightful to breakfast alone in philosophic seclusion, uninterrupted by the vain, idle prattle of women! Not that any man enjoys the conversation of his wife more than I do—at an agreeable distance. But one may have too much of a good thing—and it was with the vivid consciousness of that fact, that I placed the pony phæton at my dear Mrs. Snoozle's disposal this morning, and not only prevailed on her to take a drive to London but was fortunate enough to persuade her to make our daughter Jemima Jane, and our neice, Maria Matilda, her travelling companions. The dear creatures delight in shopping, and I don't. But that's not all —in order to make "assurance double sure," I've given the servants a holiday, so that I shall have the whole day to myself. If there is any one thing more thoroughly satisfactory than another, it is having a day to oneself. (*takes a folded newspaper off the table*) The morning paper. (*puts it down*) I shan't even open it. I shall wait till Mrs. Snoozle comes home—when *she* begins to talk, *I'll* begin to read. Holloa! what's this? (*taking a letter from off the table, and examining it*) Another letter from Mr. John Johnson, Junior. I'll swear to the hand —and well I may—I've had sixteen of them. Now, if there is any one thing in the world that could possibly put me into a state of excitement, it is this Mr. John Johnson, Junior's indefatigable perseverance. To his first letter—containing a modest proposal for the hand

of my neice, Maria Matilda—I returned a civil, but decided negative. I didn't know Mr. John Johnson, Junior—I had never seen Mr. John Johnson, Junior—I had never even heard of Mr. John Johnson, Jr.—and it was'nt very probable that I was going to give myself the trouble of inquiring *who* Mr. John Johnson, Junior, was—or *who* Mr. John Johnson, Junior, was. Was it rational to suppose that I, of all men in the world, was going to put myself into a state of excitement about Mr. John Johnson, Junior? Of course not! Consequently, his next half-dozen letters were unanswered—and his next lot of, which this is the ninth weren't even opened—so go in there, Mr. John Johnson, Junior,! (*opens drawer of table, and puts in the letter*) I wonder what o'clock it is? Now, any other man would look at his watch—but really, what with the trouble of taking it out, and looking at it, and putting it back again, it isn't worth the excitement. Now probably any other man in my circumstances would go out gardening or shooting—not that there's any positive exuberance of game in Hampstead—or fishing; now I *have* some fish in *my* fish pond. I put them in myself, and consequently I feel myself authorized in calling my pond a fish pond. I would not mind going out fishing, if I was sure that I shouldn't catch anything; but, really, what with the excitement of watching the float, and then the frightful shock, if there happens to come a nibble, it's more than my nervous system will bear. (*rises, looks off at back*) Holloa, holloa! who is that strange, and by no means fashionably dressed individual, trespassing in the immediate neighborhood of my fish pond—and what's the man about? I repeat the question—what's the man about? Good gracious! he's divesting himself of his upper garment—but whether his intention is to take a bath, or drown himself—whether he is contemplating the fish, or suicide. Ha! he claps his hands together—he's about to take a "one, two, three, and off she goes!" but he sha'n't. No—here, stop—stop! (*Rushes out*, C. D.)

Sno. (*without*) Come here, sir—come along, sir—I say, come along, sir!

Re-enters with the INTRUDER, *shabbily dressed, his coat half off: leaning on his shoulder.*

—Now, look up, there's a good man—look up, I say! (*fiercely, shaking him*) It's no use. There, there! (*places him in arm chair*, L. H.) What a frightful state of excitement I'm in, to be sure. I almost wish I'd let him drown himself. Sir—I say, sir! (*shaking the* INTRUDER, *who makes violent motion of swimming—observing him*) He's evidently laboring under the erroneous impression that he's swimming several times round my fish pond. Sir—sir—(*dips his fingers into the fish bowl, and sprinkles water into the* INTRUDER'S *face.*)

In. Where am I? (*looking up at* SNOOZLE, *and nodding to him.*) Ah! how are you, old fellow? (*stares about him.*) As I said before, where am I? Let me collect my scattered senses. How did I get here—in this chair? Is it a chair? It *is* a chair! And what's this—a

table? Yes! Bread? (*takes loaf off table.*) Yes! Butter? (*putting knife into butter, and looking at it.*) Yes! (*looks up again at* SNOOZLE.) Ha!—(*turns him round.*) — that extraordinary dress — (*grasping his arm, and looking intently into his face.*)—those ordinary features! Yes, yes! I remember all! And now, sir — I say, now ponderous man (*throwing both his legs over the arm of chair*)—perhaps you'll condescend to explain, in as few words as possible, what all this means?

Sno Sir, I am strongly impressed with the idea that the great majority of mankind would consider me warranted in putting that question to *you.*

Int. Pooh, pooh! come to the point, sir — no evasion. Will you allow me to ask you, do you look upon yourself as my father — or either of my brothers—or any of my uncles? In short, as any relation to me, whatever?

Sno. Certainly not, sir.

Int. Do you know who I am?

Sno. No!

Int. Did you ever see me before?

Sno. No! And candor compels me to say, that I don't very much care if I never see you again!

Int. Then, sir—(*rising, and advancing upon* SNOOZLE) — you'll allow me to ask you, by what right do you presume to take such an impertinent liberty as to prevent my drowning myself, if I think proper?

Sno. Infatuated juvenile!—

Int. No shuffling, sir—I demand an answer! I don't pretend to be more particular than other people, but, at the same time, as I never take a liberty with anybody, I never allow anybody to take a liberty with me. For instance—if you were to devote the remainder of your existence to making away with your life, do you suppose I should ever interfere with you? Never, corpulent being—never! (*crosses to* L. H.)

Sno. Don't talk nonsense, young man! I consider it my duty, as a distinguished member of the Royal Humane Society, to—

Int. No such thing, sir! My belief is, that you grudged me a last resting-place among your fishes. Yes, bulky individual, that was your selfish motive!

Sno. (*annoyed*) Well, then, I'm sorry for it. I heartily wish you were at the bottom of my fish pond at this moment. If you doubt, you know were it is—go and try.

Int. Well, 'pon my life, you're a cool sort of fellow! A very likely matter, that I'm going to drown myself to suit your convenience, when you wouldn't let me do it to suit my own! But, dear me, perhaps all this time I may have mistaken your reasons for saving my life. Of course I have. You could have but one motive—

Sno. [*gratified*] Of course not—and that was—

Int. To provide for me, for the remainder of my existence!

Sno. To provide for you!

Int. Of course! There—[*grasping* SNOOZLE'S *hand*] say no more—I forgive you!

Sno. [*indignant*] Forgive me!

Int. Yes; and what's more, you must allow me instantly to embrace you!

Sno. Pooh!

Int. I insist upon instantly embracing you.

Sno. Nonsense! besides, I haven't shaved to-day.

Int. Then, I'll embrace you to-morrow.

Sno. To-morrow! Ha, ha! So you're coming back, are you?

Int. Coming back? I'm not going!

Sno. Not going!

Int. Of course not! No, sir, if there is one sentiment more prominent than another in this bosom, it is gratitude. Yes sir, gratitude! What! leave you—my preserver—my benefactor? No, sir, I should never forgive myself if I didn't stick to you through life. *(tapp ing* SNOOZLE *on the shoulder.)* Even at this very moment sir, it's just as much as I can do to refrain from embracing you, though you haven't shaved! What can I say more? Huge man, what can I say more?

Sno. Sir, I'm deeply touched with your expression of gratitude for the trifling service that I—

Int. Trifling service? *You* may call it a trifle, but I don't. I contend, that if A. saves the life of B.—that B. being a total stranger to A.—solely for the purpose of providing for the remainder of B.'s life, and totally regardless of the approbation of the public—whom I shall designate as C. and D.—why it's evident that in preserving the aforesaid B., the above mentioned A. can only have been actuated by the purest motives—and that, I am sure, would be the opinion of the great majority of an enlightened C. and D.

Sno. Sir, don't talk nonsense. This is a most unwarrantable intrusion, sir. *[aside]* I'll go to the window and look out for an occasional policeman. Perhaps one may pass. It isn't very likely—but 1857 has been a very remarkable year—why not 1858? *[retires up R. H.]*

Int. I say, sir—

Sno. Well?

Int. How much do you pay for your lump? *[tasting sugar.]*

Sno. My what, sir?

Int. Your lump!

Sno. You'd better ask my grocer, sir.

Int. No: that would be taking a liberty. Besides, your grocer might say that you don't pay at all—ha, ha! I say, sir—have you anything particular to do, just now?

Sno. No, sir!

Int. Then suppose you ask me, as a particular favor, to tell you my melancholy story?

Sno. I shan't do any such thing, sir!

Int. Very well—then I'll tell you without your asking. So, take a seat, extensive creature!

Sno. If it's the same thing to you, sir, I'd rather stand.

Int. But it isn't the same thing to me, or I shouldn't ask you to sit down. You're talking nonsense!

Sno. *(aside)* I suppose I had better humor this eccentric being. I sha'n't want a day to myself in a hurry again! *(aloud)* Very well, Sir; since you insist upon it, I will sit down. *(going towards easy chair.)*

Int. So will I. (*seats himself in easy chair, and pushes another chair towards* SNOOZLE, L. H.)

Sno. I beg pardon, sir, but I've a preference for the chair that you are sitting in, sir——

Int. So have I, or I shouldn't be sitting in it! The thing speaks for itself—so, sit down. (*lounges back in the easy chair, and puts his legs on the other, as* SNOOZLE *is about to seat himself*, L. H.) What a strange fellow you are. Why the deuce don't you sit down?

Sno. (*disgusted, crosses to* R. *and takes chair forward*) There! (*seating himself on another chair.*)

Int. What are you sitting out there for? You might as well be in the next country!

Sno. I wish I was, sir. (*places chair* R. *of table*)

Int. Do you? Well, wait till you've heard my story, and then you can go! Now, then—but before I begin, I think it necessary to mention—[*taking up a plate from off the table, and playing with it*—SNOOZLE *takes it out of his hand*] I repeat, I think it necessary to mention that there are one or two points in my history that may probably strike you as somewhat remarkable.

Sno. [*disgusted*] Oh, go on, do!

Int. In the first place, I never had any mother or father. That's a singular fact, isn't it?

Sno. Oh, come, come—

Int. Well, if you doubt it, I refer you to them. Consequently, I never had any name. That's another singular fact. So what do you think I did? I christened myself—stood my own godfather and godmother! That's another singular fact, eh? [*opening and shutting tea caddy*—SNOOZLE *removes it to table*, R.] And what name do you think I gave myself?

Sno. I'm sure I don't know.

Int. Of course you don't—but you can guess, big man—you can guess—[*taking toasting fork, and pricking him.*]

Sno. [*disgusted*] Well, then, perhaps you called yourself Thomas, or John—

Int. That's it! John! Ah, somebody told you. Yes, I called myself John. I like John—don't you?

Sno. [*yawning*] Very much indeed.

Int. I don't believe you do. If you don't, say so. I've not the slightest objection to christen myself again—it's not the least trouble. Perhaps you prefer James? With all my heart. We'll say James.

Sno. [*shouting*] I don't care.

Int. You're sure you don't? Then why object to John?

Sno. I didn't!

Int. Very well—then John be it. But, seriously—if you really prefer James—

Sno. [*shouting*] I tell you, it's a matter of the most perfect indifference to me.

Int. Then why the deuce make all this fuss about it? [*taking up toasting fork again, and stirring the fish bowl.* SNOOZLE *removes it again*] Well, as I have said before, I called myself John. So I—I'm sure you prefer James!

Sno. [*shouting.*] Will you go on with your story, sir.

Int. However, I require a surname, so by the bye, I think I forgot to mention that I was brought up in the country—

Sno. [*aside*] I wish you'd never been brought up *from* the country!

Int. Well, sir—[*leaning back in chair, and ringing bell on table violently*—SNOOZLE *takes it out of his hand*] the house that my old nurse lived in—for she *did* live in a house—I don't mention *that* as a singular fact, but—

Sno. Go on sir!

Int. Well, the house she lived in—I might say, died in—for, being a remarkably old woman she *did* die—I don't mention *that* as a singular fact, but—

Sno. Go on sir!

Int. Well—(*putting a piece of sugar in his mouth*—SNOOZLE *removes sugar basin*)—the house she lived in—I mean while she was alive not since—was surrounded by a hedge of flourishing young ashplants. Well, one day, Mr.—By the bye, what's your name?

Sno. Snoozle, sir!

Int. Snoozle, sir! Snoozle! Snoozle!

Sno. Snoozle, sir!

Int. Snoozle, sir—it suddenly occurred to me that I'd call myself Ashplant, and what's more, I *did* call myself Ashplant. Well, I thought the name would do very well. What do you think!

Sno. I think so too.

Int. Then you're wrong, because it won't! No, for on revisiting, the other day, the scenes of my childhood, I found, to my dismay, that every alternate ash plant had been removed, and its place supplied by a holly bush.

Sno. Well, what of that?

Int. What of that? Well I'm surprised at you! Doesn't it follow, as a natural consequence, that I don't know now whether to call myself Ashplant or Hollybush? Which do you like best?

Sno. (*very quickly*) Ashplant, sir! I unhesitatingly decide in favour of Ashplant—so, get on!

Int. Well, I'm sorry for that, because I rather prefer Hollybush However, if you're particular about your Ashplant, I'll give up my Hollybush. I can't say more.

Sno. Go on!

Int. Well, sir—(*opening table drawer, and taking out a letter, unseen by* SNOOZLE, *who has turned away in disgust*)—as I was about to observe—(*breaking seal, and reading letter*) "Why doom a wretched lover to despair, relentless Snoozle?"

Sno. How dare you, sir—[*turns the table—a revolving one—so that the fish bowl and urn come opposite to* INTRUDER] *Int.* [*looking at fish*] Pretty little dears! I wonder if they like muffin. [*flings two muffins into bowl*] Holloa! these fish want fresh water—relentless Snoozle, these fish want fresh water! [*turns cock of the urn which is just over the fish bowl.*]

Sno. Zounds! what's he at now? [SNOOZLE *removes bowl, stops water, and places it on table,* R. H.]

Int. [*taking another paper out of drawer, and reading*] "Mr. Snoozle to Jemina Brown. Six shirts, one and ninepence—four pair of"—

Sno. Oh, confound it! [*drags table violently away. The* INTRUDER *has hold of handle of drawer, which comes out, and a mass of letters, papers, &c. fall out.*]

Int. There—there! Don't go and say I did it! Never mind—I'll pick 'em all up to-morrow, or the day after!

Sno. This is intolerable—insufferable! [*taking out a gold snuff box, and taking a pinch*] In short, sir, I don't like it!

Int. Don't you? [*takes snuff box from* SNOOZLE, *and helps himself*] Well, I've tasted better myself— try mine! [*offering a small common tin box to* SNOOZLE, *who indignantly opens it, and takes a large pinch..*] That's rather the thing, eh? You like a change sometimes? Of course you do—so do I! [*puts* SNOOZLE'S *snuff box into his pocket.*]

Sno. Give me that snuff box, sir.

Int. Don't be in a hurry. You shall have it again, some day or other, before I go. But, by the bye, I haven't finished my story yet.

Sno. Pshaw! [*walks about*]

Int. That's right. A little exercise before dinner will do us both good. [*takes* SNOOZLE'S *arm, walks him up and down*] Well, as I was going to say——Stop a bit.—[*sneezes—then seeing part of* SNOOZLE'S *handkerchief hanging out of his pocket, takes it out and uses it.*] Those are capital teeth of yours—where did you get them from?

Sno. Go on, sir?

Int. Well then, sir, in due time I reached the age of manhood, and from that moment Fortune frowned upon me. I found myself without a family, without friends, without a name, except Ashplant—no, Hollybush—no, Ashplant! Which *was* it? Really, you *do* confuse me in such a dreadful manner——

Sno. (*shouting*) Go on, sir!

Int. I shan't be happy till you tell me where you got your teeth from? Well, as I said before——

Sno. Goodness gracious! never mind what you said before!

Int. But you really bother me so. Suppose I go back to the beginning?

Sno. No—suppose you come to the ending—as quick as you conveniently can.

Int. Well,then——I don't much like that morning-gown of yours—made out of a pair of decayed bed curtains, I should say. Never mind. Well, to resume. Fortune at last smiled upon me—actually smiled upon me, in the shape of a woman—young, amiable, beautiful, and rich—but unfortunately she had an uncle—and what was worse, she was his niece. I don't mention *that* as a singular fact, but she *was*! *He* wouldn't hear of me—wouldn't even answer my letters—consequently, I grew desperate! What was life to me without the aforesaid lovely niece of the above-mentioned cruel uncle? Nothing! So I determined to make away with myself—and for that purpose I followed the course of the New River, till I got to your fishpond; but you thought proper to interfere. I felt rather annoyed at first—

but now that I know your benevolent purpose, I'm determined you sha'n't be disappointed. You've generously undertaken to provide for me for the remainder of my existence! To prove that I'm not ungrateful, here goes! (*takes off his coat and is about to put on a dress coat which is hanging over a chair near him*)

Sno. Holloa, holloa! what's the man about?

Int. Why, you don't imagine that I'd let people say that you didn't give me a good coat to my back? No—I've too much respect for you! (*about to put on coat*)

Sno. Don't put on that garment, sir! That's the coat that I go to dinner parties in.

Int. Oh! you go out to dinner parties, do you? Of course you'll take me with you? (*about to put on coat*)

Sno. Will you give me that coat, sir?

Int. (*examining it*) You don't mean to say you wear such a thing as this?

Sno. A thing?

Int. Why, you must look a regular Guy in it!

Sno. A Guy?

Int. I'm sure of it!

Sno. Oh! you are, are you? Very well! (*takes off his dressing-gown, which he throws on chair, and puts on coat*) Now, sir! (*turning his back to* INTRUDER) Now, sir, what d'ye think of me?

Int. (*who in the meantime puts on dressing-gown*) If you come to that, what do you think of me? [*turning his back to* SNOOZLE]

Sno. [*looking at him*] Holloa! Give me that dressing-gown!

Int. Well, what will you ask me for next, I wonder? First you want my coat—then you want my dressing-gown! I suppose next you'll want my purse? [*takes purse out of dressing gown pocket*]

Sno. I'm going stark-staring mad! I feel I am!

Int. No, are you? I should like to see how you do it. You'll wait till I've had my breakfast? [*sits down*] Suppose you fry me a couple of your fish? [*looks at the bowl*]

Sno. I shan't do any such thing sir!

Int. Won't you? Well, boil 'em—I'm not particular!

Sno. [*coming to table opposite* INTRUDER] Sir—[*strikes the table with his fist*]—you won't get any breakfast here! There's nothing in the house—and there's nobody in the house to get any thing in the house! My servants are gone out—my wife's gone out—my daughter's gone out—my niece is gone out—in short, we're all gone out,—and the sooner you follow our example, and go out too, the better!

Int. Well, I've not the least objection—especially as the ladies are not at home. But I suppose I shall see them at dinner?

Sno. Dinner!

Int. What's your hour?

Sno. Sometimes one, and sometimes another!

Int. Ah! you like to vary the thing, eh? (*looking about him*) Really, this is a very satisfactory little place of yours! Nice room, this—and not badly fitted up either—though I must say I don't altogether like the arrangement of the furniture!

Sno. It doesn't much signify, sir!

Int. I beg your pardon—it signifies a good deal. For instance, that sofa has no business there! (*pushes sofa to other side of stage*) There—that's much better!

Sno. What are you about, sir? (*while* SNOOZLE *runs and replaces sofa, the* INTRUDER *goes to flower stand*)

Int. That flower stand down here! (*pushes flower stand down to foot lights*) There, now a chair on each side—there—that's a great improvement. (*sits down with his back to Audience*)

Sno. He'll be the death of me (*falling into the other chair*)

Int. Strictly speaking, the whole of that side of the room ought to come down. [*points to back*]

Sno. You'd better pull the entire tenement down at once, sir.

Int. There's no knowing what I may do, some day or other, before I go. So, you've got a wife, have you? A charming, lovely creature, I'll be bound—not like that frightful old Jezabel up there—[*points to portrait of a lady*]

Sno. [*starts up*] That frightful old Jezabel, up there, happens to be my wife.

Int. No! (*starts up and seizes* SNOOZLE'S *hand*) I congratulate you! You may make yourself perfectly comfortable about Mrs. Snoozelser!

Sno. Snoozle!

Int. But, if you'll allow me, I think I can suggest an improvement. [*goes and turns portrait with its head down*] There—Mrs. Snoozleser looks much better so.

Sno. [*who has replaced the flower stand to where it originally stood—seeing the* INTRUDER] What's he been at now? He's turned Mrs. Snoozle upside down. [*observing* INTRUDER, *who has taken a painting brush, and is touching up the picture on the easel*] Come away from that picture, sir!

Int. Let me paint your portrait.

Sno. I have sat for my portrait already, sir.

Int. Then suppose you stand for it on one leg. I should like to take you on one leg. Oh, that's you, I suppose! [*looking at man's portrait*] You don't mean to say you sat for that picture?

Sno. I certainly did, sir, and it's just come home.

Int. Then you must have been sitting on thorns, or something equally uncomfortable, for a more hideous expression of countenance I never saw in all my life—never! I can't bear to look at it! That's not your eye. I'll paint it for you. (*takes palette and brush, and gives it a dab of black on the eye*) That's more like you. [*goes to piano and opens it*] I'll play you a tune.

Sno. Don't touch that piano, sir.

Int. Confound it, you won't let me do anything. [*turns towards* SNOOZLE, *and crosses his arms*] What do you mean by it? I repeat—what do you mean by it? [*sits down on keys of piano*]

Sno. (*shouting*) You'll dislocate the piano, sir.

Int. Well, what if I do? I'll put it to rights again, some day or other before I go. (*sits down to piano, and runs up and down the notes, then begins to sing very loud, and very much out of tune*)

Sno. Don't make such a noise—I could hear you a mile off.

Int. You couldn't!

Sno. I could!

Int. (*begins singing again*) Go and try.

Sno. Will you be quiet?

Int. (*gets on chair, takes a book from off shelf, hanging up near* L. H. D. *starts, and looks off,* C. D.) Holloa! by Jove, what a magnificient creature! (*throws down the book-case, the books all fall, he jumps off chair, runs down to* SNOOZLE, *takes him by the arm, and hurries up to* C. D. *and points off*) Who is she? There—don't you see—coming up the gravel walk, in the sky blue bonnet!

Sno. My wife come back!

Int. Your wife—Mrs. Snoozleser?

Sno. No, no!

Int. You said your wife!

Sno. I didn't!

Int. Oh, very well—then I'll go and talk to her—[*going*]

Sno. I won't allow it. [*stopping him*]

Int. Come, I like that. If she isn't your wife, what can it matter to you? Where's my hat? Never mind — this'll do! [*snatches cap off* SNOOZLE'S *head, and puts it on*]

Sno. [*stopping him*] Stop where you are, sir!

Int. Excuse me—but as you think proper to find fault with everything I do, I'd rather go.

Sno. [*pulls him back*] But I'd rather you didn't go. [*aside*] I wouldn't have him speak to Mrs. Snoozle for the world.

Int. Besides, you told me to go just now—

Sno. But I didn't mean it. I like you—I like you much. I never met so entertaining—I might say facinating a creature, in all my life! In short, you're the delight of my existence—so, perhaps you'll oblige me by playing me a tune on the piano.

Int. No!

Sno. Then take my portrait, I'll stand on one leg.

Int. No, no—[*going*]

Sno. [*stopping him*] [*aside*] What's to be done.

Int. [*shouting towards* C. D.] I'll be with you directly, ma'am!

Sno. [*aside*] I have it. [*aloud*] My dear Mr. Hollybush—

Int. Oh, now it's Hollybush—just now it was Ashplant. That's so like you—you don't know your own mind for five minutes together. [*shouts again*] I'm coming, Ma'am!

Sno. Well, then—my dear Ashplant—

Int. There—now it's Ashplant again! Just now it was Hollybush!

Sno. You were lately describing to me in the most touching terms imaginable—they affect me even now—(*makes a pathetic face*)—your hopeless Passion for a young and lovely virgin——

Int. Ah, but then I hadn't seen that skyblue bonnet. I love that skyblue bonnet—my very existence is bound up in that skyblue bonnet!

Sno. (*keeping him back*) But, perhaps, if the aforesaid cruel uncle of the above-mentioned lovely niece, thought you possed a little money ——[*with intention.*]

Int. I know you you'll give me lots of money—but what's the use of that? What I want is a name—a family—a father and mother? ——By the bye, why shouldn't you be my father and mother?

You shall be my father and mother! [*gives* SNOOZLE *a violent slap on the back.*]

Sno. Pooh! pooh!

Int. You won't adopt me?

Sno. Certainly not!

Int. Very well—then I'll make love to that skyblue bonnet. I'll make that skyblue bonnet the happiest woman in England! I'll write to her this instant! Pens, ink, and paper—where are pens, ink, and paper? [*rummages tables, drawers, &c. followed by* SNOOZLE, *who, as soon as the* INTRUDER *seats himself at a table to write, stands on the opposite side of the table, and lays his hand on the sheet of paper, or takes the inkstand away.*]

Sno. (*with dignity*) Sir, it's time the veil was rent asunder. That lady in the skyblue bonnet is my wife!

Int. I'm sorry for you! you ought to have mentioned it before It's too late now! I love her! She's necessary to my existence—so you'll give her up, won't you?

Sno Give her up!

Int Perhaps you'd rather give me your daughter?

Sno. No, sir!

Int. At any rate, you'll give me your niece?

Sno. No!

Int. Neither one nor the other?

Sno. Neither one nor the other!

Int. Then I'll take them all three! (*goes up to* C.D.) Here, sir—here will I take my stand—here will I stick, firm and fixed as one of the door posts, and the instant any one of them—or any two of them—or all three of them appear, I throw myself at their several feet!

Voice. [*from* R.H.D.] Mr. Snoozle! Mr. Snoozle!

Sno. My wife!

Int. His wife! (SNOOZLE *rushes to* R.H.D., *shuts, and bolts it.*)

Voice. (*from* C.D.) Papa! dear papa!

Sno. My daughter! [*he runs and closes* C.D. *By this time the* INTRUDER *has re-opened* L.H.D. *and is going in.*]

Int. His daughter! [*runs and opens* C.D.]

Voice. [*from* L.H.D.] Uncle! uncle!

Sno. My niece! (*runs and closes* L.H.D.)

Int. His niece! (*runs towards* L.H.D.)

Sno. [*meets him, seizes him by the collar, and drags him forward*] "Of one or both of us the time is come!" In short, sir, if you don't instantly go and drown yourself, I will!

Int. Benevolent being! your delicacy won't permit you to give me up your wife, so you generously enable me to marry your widow! So, go—drown yourself, and be happy!

Sno. Will you leave this house, sir? Will you at once put an end to this unwarrantable intrusion?

Int. No, sir—nothing shall induce me to deprive you of the pleasure of my society!

Sno. Then I'll have you turned out!

Int. You can't, sir!

Sno. Hark ye, sir—my niece loves a young gentleman—that young

gentleman loves my niece—I'll write to him this moment—give my consent to the match—but on one condition—and that is, that he instantly comes and kicks you out of my domicile!

Int. Ha, ha! I should like to see you do it!

Sno. You would, would you? Then here goes! [*sits down, and begins to write*] "My dear Mr. Johnson, Junior—the hand of my niece, Maria Matilda, is yours, with a fortune of five thousand pounds!"

Int. Johnson won't be satisfied—

Sno. Then I'll make it ten! [*writing*] "Ten thousand pounds! Your affectionate uncle, that is to be, NATHANIEL SNOOZLE." There—[*folds letter*] And now, if I could only contrive to get it immediately delivered—

Int. Nothing so simple! (*takes letter out of* SNOOZLE'S *hand*) It is delivered! Thank ye, uncle! [*bedding to* SNOOZLE.]

Sno. Uncle! Then you are—

Int. Mr. John Johnson, Junior, at your service! You wouldn't ask me to come and see you, so I came without your asking. I couldn't understand why you didn't answer my letters, so I came to ascertain the reason. I wanted to marry your niece—you said I should never have your consent—I said I *would*, and here it is!—[*flourishing letter.*] I repeat, here it is—Go on, Paul.

Paul Bedford. I havn't got any more in my part! [*taking part out of his pocket, and showing it.*]

Wright. No more have I!

Paul Bedford. I say, prompter!

Enter PROMPTER, L.H.

Prompter. Yes, sir—

Paul Bedford. Hasn't the Author sent the tag yet?

Prompter. No, sir—here's the MS.

Wright. Just like him! You knew he didn't send the tag to his last new Farce till about five minutes before the curtain went up.

Prompter. I heard him say it was no use his writing a tag, for Mr. Wright always spoke his own.

Wright. That's not the fact. There's no man on the Stage takes less liberties with his Author than I do. Well, Paul—I suppose we must finish the Piece as well as we can. The usual thing is to make a pathetic appeal to the Audience—so be pathetic, Paul—

Paul Bedford. No—you understand that better than I do.

Wright. Then, Ladies and Gentlemen, all I can say is that if we have committed some errors, let us hope that they are trifling ones: at any rate, we'll manage to correct them by to-morrow evening, if you'll oblige us by looking in—and depend upon it, come as often as you like, we shall never consider it an "UNWARRANTABLE INTRUSION."

Curtain.

* * *Originally played by Messrs. Paul Bedford and Wright.*

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